



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools



**OUR LADY'S SCHOOL
NEWSLETTER**
6 February 2026
olsunshine.catholic.edu.au

Parish Priest: Fr. Peter-Damien McKinley
Principal: Mrs Caroline Madigan
Parish Mass Times:
English: Saturday 9.00am, 5.30pm, Sunday 9.00am, 10.30am & 5.30pm
Vietnamese: Saturday 7.00pm, Sunday 12.30pm, Friday 7.30pm
Chin Haka/Burmese: 2.30pm
Tongan: Every 1st Sunday 3.00pm
School Phone: 9312 2230
School website: www.olsunshine.catholic.edu.au

Our Lady's is a Child Safe School



Christ beside me: Walking in the footsteps of St Patrick

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Mon 16 Feb School Photos
Wed 18 Feb Ash Wednesday
Thur 19 Feb 2.00pm Parent Helper Info Session
Mon 23 Feb Beginning of School Mass at 11.30am
Tues 24 Feb 9.00am Parent Helper Info Session
Wed 25 Feb 7.00pm PAB AGM
Mon 2 Mar 8.30am Smoking Ceremony
Wed 4 Mar 7.00pm Foundation Parent Learning Info Session
Mon 9 Mar Labour Day Public Holiday
Wed 18-Fri 20 Mar Yrs 5/6 Camp
Tues 24 Mar 6.30 Reconciliation Parent Night
Wed 25 Mar 5.00pm Foundation Family Picnic
Thur 2 Apr End of Term 1 at 1.00pm
Mon 20 Apr *Closure Day - Professional Development for Staff (Literacy). No School for the children*
Tues 21 Apr Start of Term 2

2026 Professional Development Days for staff

Term 1
Mon 20 April - Literacy Focus
Term 2
Fri 5 June - TIL
Term 3
Mon 13 July - TIL
Term 4
Mon 3 November - PPT (Report Writing)
Friday 27 November - 2027 Planning
1:00pm finish days at the end of each term
Term 1 - Thur 2 April
Term 2 - Fri 26 June
Term 3 - Fri 18 September
Term 4 - Tues 15 December (last day of the 2026 school year for students).

Term 2 - Three Way Conversations (First Semester Reports)
Wed 24 and Thur 25 June

SACRAMENT DATES FOR 2026

Year 3 Reconciliation
Wednesday 29 April at 6.00pm
Year 4 Eucharist
Sunday 17 May at 10.30am
Year 6 Confirmation
Friday 31 July at 7.00pm

Dear Families,

A very warm welcome back to the new school year. We extend a special and heartfelt welcome to our Foundation students and those who are new to our school community. We hope the start to the year has been both enjoyable and exciting for you and your children. It has been a joy to see our newest members settling in so well, forming friendships, and engaging with school life with such enthusiasm. All students have begun the year positively and are approaching their learning with energy and curiosity. We also warmly welcome our new staff members to Our Lady's. We are delighted to have Mr Anthony Paladino (Year 1K) and Ms Anna Maria Murphy (Year 5C) join our school community. We wish them every blessing as they begin their journey at Our Lady's, and we hope they enjoy a rewarding and fulfilling time with us. As we begin this term together, I would also like to sincerely thank you for the care, time and effort you invest in preparing your children for school each day. Your support, encouragement and partnership with us are deeply valued and play a vital role in the success and wellbeing of our students.



Weekly morning Gatherings:

We are grateful to our families, students and staff for their patience and understanding as we have worked through some changes to our morning community gatherings. Your flexibility and cooperation have allowed us to better support families and strengthen our sense of connection. I am pleased to share that students and staff were recently given the opportunity to name our start-of-the-week whole school gatherings. Each class submitted a vote, and it is with great joy that I announce our weekly gatherings will now be known as '**Community Connect**'.



As we gather at the start of each week for our **Community Connect** gatherings, families are warmly invited to join us. Holding these gatherings in the morning provides families with an opportunity to attend, particularly when after school

Beginning of School Year Prayer



At the beginning of this school year, we thank you, God, for so many things: Our school, our classrooms, our friends and our teachers. Help us to be thankful for each day and to use it well. We thank you for the gift of this new day, for the learning and the fun we will have. Help us to appreciate everything that is done for us. Amen

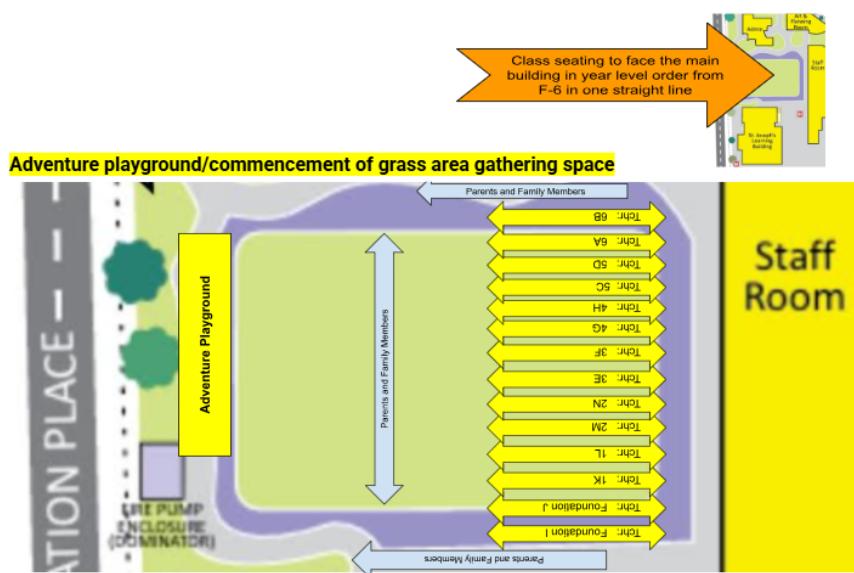
commitments make it difficult to do so. During Community Connect, we come together in prayer, share weekly news and celebrate our community.

To clarify our morning routine once the school gate opens at **8:20 am**:

Students may leave their bags at their class line and then move to the basketball courts to catch up with friends. When they hear the bell, they are asked to return promptly and line up in their correct class order. Thank you for supporting your children in following this routine, which helps ensure a calm and safe start to the day.

Whole school assemblies:

There have also been some slight changes to our whole school assembly schedule. The school will hold a whole school assembly at the **start, middle and end of each school term**, held on a **Friday**. In addition, our Junior School (Foundation–Year 2) and Middle/Senior School (Years 3–6) assemblies will alternate every other week. Please refer to the timetable for this information.



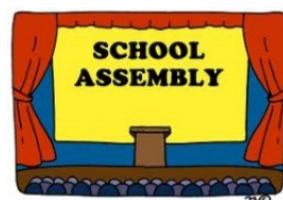
Respect and Compassion:

In light of Pope Leo XIV declaring this year the **Year of St Francis**, our school will be placing a strong focus on **Respect and Compassion**. Inspired by the life and teachings of St Francis, we encourage our students to show kindness, humility and care for others in their words and actions, reflecting Christ's love in all that they do. Thank you once again for your continued support and trust. We look forward to walking alongside you and your children throughout the year as one faith-filled community.



Assembly Timetable for Term 1

Friday 6 February	<i>Whole School</i>	Friday 13 February	<i>Yrs 3-6</i>
Friday 20 February	<i>Yrs F-2</i>	Friday 27 February	<i>Yrs 3-6</i>
Friday 6 March	<i>Whole School</i>	Friday 13 March	<i>Yrs 3-6</i>
Friday 20 March	<i>Yrs F-2</i>	Friday 27 March	<i>Yrs 3-6</i>
Thursday 2 April	<i>Whole School</i>		



Warm regards,

Caroline Madigan

Mrs Caroline Madigan

Principal

principal@olsunshine.catholic.edu.au

INTRODUCING OUR STAFF FOR 2026

Parish Priest: Fr Peter-Damien McKinley

Principal: Mrs Caroline Madigan

Deputy Principal / Wellbeing Leader: Mrs Christine Carabott

Leadership Team

Principal: Mrs Caroline Madigan

Deputy Principal / Wellbeing Leader: Mrs Christine Carabott

RE & Teaching and Learning Leader: Mrs Tania Cuni

Literacy Leader: Ms Lisa Piperno

Design & Digital Technologies Leader: Mr John Buttigieg

Learning Diversity Leader: Ms Seona Payne

Literacy Team

Ms Lisa Piperno (Literacy Leader)

Mr John Buttigieg

Classroom Teachers

Mrs Shai Backus

Mrs Belinda Whelan & Ms Jo McManus

Ms Anna Murphy & Mrs Tanya Majczak

Ms Rebecca Chiodo

Ms Beatrice Robles

Ms Michelle Gurry

Mrs Huyen Nguyen

Ms Karen Everson & Ms Jen Howe

Mrs Lillian Valencia

Ms Thuy Vu

Mrs Menica Granata & Mr Anthony Paladino

Mrs Rochelle Kumar

Mrs Angelica Mendoza & Ms Christine Chu

Ms Steph Huynh

Specialist Teachers

PE Ms Jo McManus

Art Ms Pina Mc Donald

LOTE (Italian) Mr Matteo Maccio

Wellbeing (STARS) Mrs Cam Tu Nguyen

Learning Diversity Team

Ms Seona Payne (Learning Diversity Leader)

Mrs Lorraine Bugeja

Mrs Gina Callanan

Mrs Lynda Gardy

Mrs Frances Mafodda

Ms Kathleen Caruana

Ms Nora Tomelty

Ms Jessica Ferguson

Mr Angus Hamilton

Mr Rocco Di Tirro

Library Tech

Mrs Toni Balbata

Admin Team

Mrs Mary-Anne Meilak

Mrs Jayne Hill

Mrs Catherine Elarmaly

Canteen Managers

Mrs Connie Caterino

Ms Lucie Tran

Maintenance & Gardens Team

Mr Dean Frahm

Mr John Payne

External Specialists Team

Mr Cam Lee - Counsellor

Mr Greg Woolford - Family School Partnerships Convenor

Mr Harshdeep Bhatia - MACS Business Manager

Mr Tim Buhagiar - IT Technician







TERM 1 INTERSCHOOL SPORT

This year, the Year 5 and 6 children have the opportunity to compete against schools in an Inter-School Sports competition in the Sunshine District. Our Lady's School is part of the Sunshine District Primary School Sporting Association and will compete against seven other schools in a weekly league which commences Friday the 13th of February.



Game times 9.30-10.30am

TERM 1 INTERSCHOOL SPORT DRAW

Friday 13 February **Home** Game OLPS v St Paul's

Friday 20 February **Home** Game OLPS v St Theresa's

Friday 27 February **Away** Game Harvester v OLPS

Friday 6 March **Away** Game Sunshine North v OLPS

Friday 13 March **Home** Game OLPS v Albion

Friday 20 March **BYE**

Friday 27 March **Away** Game Sunshine Heights v OLPS

During Home matches the children participating in basketball, tennis, netball and newcomb play on school grounds while those playing soccer, cricket, football and t-ball catch a bus to play at Parsons Reserve.



Is our School Crossing Supervisor the best?

Nominate our School Crossing Supervisor for the 2025/2026 School Crossing Supervisor of the year award.

Jump online and complete a nomination at www.schoolcrossingsvictoria.com.au

Your support of this program will help ensure your School Crossing Supervisor is shown the appreciation they deserve for their commitment to the ongoing safety of our children.

School Crossings Victoria INC , PO BOX 3032 Mornington 3931, schoolcrossings@gmail.com;
www.schoolcrossingsvictoria.com.au



WELCOME BACK!

10- 13 YEARS OLD

FRIDAY FORTNIGHTLY DURING SCHOOL TERM
7PM-9PM

OUR LADY'S HALL
LYONS STREET, MAIDSTONE

EDGE NIGHTS FOR TERM 1:
FEBRUARY 6 & 20
MARCH 6 & 20



For more information please email us:
olckedge@gmail.com

Sunday 1st March

12PM-5PM

Parking on Harvester Rd Sunshine
with short walk over rail footbridge

Community Festival

in the



H.V. McKay Gardens

120 Anderson Road, Sunshine

Food, market stalls, free face painting,
live performances, sporting activities, games
and prizes



Free gift for children that attend
'Singalong for the Kids' at 12:30!

Proudly
Supported by



Friends of the McKay Gardens



GIVING TOGETHERNESS TO FAMILIES FACING CHILDHOOD CANCER

T20 for KIDS with CANCER



**Sunny Heights CC
Ainsworth Reserve**

Vernon Cr, Sunshine West



**26 February 2026
Thursday**

5:00 PM - 9:00 PM



**HALAL BBQ
FIRE TRUCKS
DRINKS AVAILABLE AT BAR**



Join us for a great game of cricket and a fun night out for the whole family! All in the name of raising funds for the A+ Abbey Solo Foundation.

**POLICE HORSES
FACE PAINTING**

RAFFLE AND FUN ACTIVITIES

A+V Abbey Solo Foundation



2026



juniors pre season training

**Kicks off the week of February 2
Ainsworth Reserve
5 to 6pm**

**U12s & U14s - Mondays and Wednesdays
U8s, U9s & U10s - Wednesdays only**

**Runners only. Bring a friend
New players are welcome!**

Contact Natalie & Tanya 0420 761 685



ONE AGENCY
CARLO PUGLIA PROPERTY

H2O
Blasting Solutions

MAINTAINERS OF
RUBBISH
REMOVAL



A&A

CFMEU

nab AFL Auskick **Superkick** **PLAY**

4-7 year olds

An introductory program to Australian rules football, teaching skills through fun activities and mini games.

REGISTER HERE

7-12 year olds

Level up your footy with skills and modified match play in weekly sessions. NAB AFL Superkick is tackle-free and great for Auskick grads and newbies alike.

REGISTER HERE

**BRIMBANK & SURROUNDS
AUSKICK & SUPERKICK TERM 1**

AFL VICTORIA

AINSWORTH RESERVE, WEST
SUNSHINE
5:00PM - 6:00PM
STARTS WEDNESDAY 25TH OF
FEBRUARY

For enquiries please reach out to Josh Coward on joshua.coward@afl.com.au

**SUNSHINE HEIGHTS
FOOTBALL CLUB**



WELCOME TO TERM 1 WITH EXTEND!

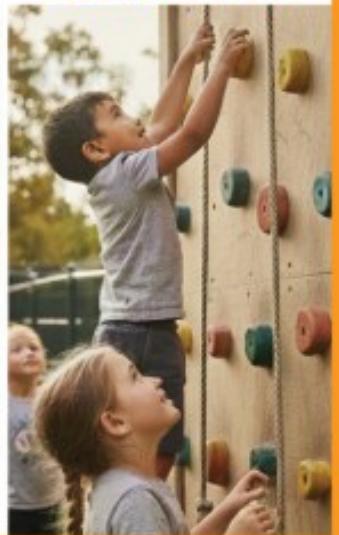
BELONGING



BEING



BECOMING



We hope you and your family had a restful break and are ready for an exciting Term 1 with Extend!

WELCOME BACK TO OUR FAMILIES FOR TERM 1 WITH EXTEND!

This term's theme for our OSHC services is:

Belonging, Being, Becoming

As we begin Term 1, it's an exciting time for your children to form new friendships, learn new skills and feel comfortable in our OSHC community!

This term, we will support children to feel connected with others, help them engage in the present moment, and encourage them to step out of their comfort zones so they can grow in confidence as they explore new interests and challenges.

Thank you for your continued support. We are excited to begin this new year together, fostering positive relationships, supporting their growth in confidence and learning as they explore!



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN TERM 1:

All About Us: Children create an 'All About Me' page to share their interests and hobbies, then display them in service so peers can learn about each other, celebrate uniqueness and build connections.

Sensory Bin: Children create a sensory bin filled with materials like leaves, sticks, stones and soil to spark curiosity and connection as children explore texture, sound and the outdoors together.

Multilingual "Hello" Poster: Children and families contribute greetings in languages spoken at our service, with each written beside its flag to celebrate diversity, support inclusion and help everyone learn how to say "hello" in different languages.

**SCAN THE QR CODE OR BOOK ONLINE
AT EXTEND.COM.AU FOR TERM 1!**





OPEN WEEK 'NEW MEMBER OFFER'

MONDAY 02 FEB - SUNDAY 08 FEB

WANT TO KNOW MORE
ABOUT TAEKWONDO?

Discover the excitement. Discover how great you can feel!

Come along, take a sneak peek - or jump in & try a
class during **Open Week!**

Experience the energy, the fun, the learning
& the legendary Hall's spirit.

NEW MEMBER OFFER:

Fast start Training Bundle. **FREE UNIFORM & INTRO CLASS**
MORE THAN \$90 VALUE- ALL WELCOME!

VISITING TIMES:

MONDAY 02 FEB - FRIDAY 06 FEB: 4pm - 7pm

SATURDAY 07 FEB: 9am- Noon

SUNDAY 08 FEB (All Centres except Preston): 9am- Noon

CLASS HIGHLIGHTS:

- See Taekwondo students in action
- Instructor & Facility Q & A's
- Participation optional
- Check out timetables
- Meet our team

BENEFITS FOR ALL AGES:

- Build confidence & self-esteem
- Resilience & courage to try new things
- Smart ways to deal with all types of bullying
- Build self-respect & respect for others
- Create & stick with good habits
- Cultivate the desire to learn
- Develop a positive attitude
- Empower your mind & body
- Enhance your flexibility
- Improve your fitness & energy
- Improve your performance in other sports
- Improve your study habits
- Learn & embody self-discipline
- Learn the importance of good character
- Sharpen your concentration & reflexes
- Always stimulated, learning in each belt level a variety of disciplines & martial arts including boxing, ground fighting, take-downs and stand-up wrestling.

CONTACT US »

www.hallstaekwondo.com.au

1300 464 255



Welcome to the community
HALL'S TAEKWONDO SUNBURY
our newest full-time Centre!
67a McDougall Road, Sunbury

— FULL-TIME CENTRES ACROSS MELBOURNE —

• Brunswick • Port Melbourne • Preston • Sunbury • Sunshine • Tullamarine

Back-to-School: What Kids Actually Need for a Strong Start

The new school year brings fresh beginnings, sharpened pencils, and—for many families—some predictable stress. Parents are told to focus on the “important things”: stationery lists, new shoes, labelled containers, and the perfect lunchbox. While these matter, they have very little to do with how well a child settles, learns, or feels in those early weeks of school.

After sending six children through school (four now graduated, two still in the system), changing schools more times than we’d like to admit due to moves and life shifts, and experiencing no fewer than **60+ first days** between them, here’s what we’ve learned:

The most important back-to-school preparation isn’t found in a shopping aisle. It’s found in the emotional, social, and relational worlds of our children.

Below are the essentials every parent should know—regardless of whether your child is 5 or 18.

The Practical Minimum (That’s Actually Enough)

Let’s start with the basics so we can get them out of the way: Backpack, lunchbox & drink bottle, required stationery or booklist items, and a few labelled essentials.

That’s it.

Children don’t need expensive pencil cases or curated Instagram-worthy lunchboxes to succeed. For most kids, those things will be lost, broken, or swapped within days. Keep it simple, and don’t confuse preparation with performance.

What Matters More Than Supplies

1. The Emotional Check-In

In our home, we run small one-on-one chats called **Personal Progress Interviews (PPIs)**. This can happen on the bed, on a walk, or driving in the car—anywhere relaxed.

Ask questions like:

- “What are you looking forward to this year?” → “Who are you excited to see?”
- “Is there anything you’re worried about?” → “What would make school feel good for you?”

These simple questions do two powerful things. Firstly, **they give children language** for their experience and secondly, **they give parents insight** into potential friction points early.

From Kindy to Year 12, children benefit from being seen and heard in this way.

2. The “Who’s Got Your Back?” Plan

Every child needs to know where support lives at school. Ask:

- “Who is your teacher or year advisor?” → “Who can you talk to if you feel worried or unsafe?”
- “Which friend could you sit with or find at break time?” → “How can you contact me if you need to?”

Younger kids may need a walk around the school to locate their classroom, bag area, toilets, office/first aid, and pick-up points.

Older kids often need help identifying **social safety nets**, not just physical locations.

3. Stop Worrying About Sleep & Morning Routines

Parents often feel pressured to overhaul sleep schedules or rehearse morning routines. Realistically, sleep will settle within days once school begins. Routines form naturally when they become relevant. Over-engineering these things creates unnecessary tension.

Instead, focus on **expectation-setting**: “The first week is tiring for everyone. It takes time to adjust. That’s normal.” Children cope better when they know discomfort is temporary and expected.

The Back-to-School Checklist That Actually Changes the Year

Beyond emotional readiness, four strategies make a measurable difference across the school year for children of all ages:

1. The “How Can I Help?” Conversation

During the week before school, ask:

- “What do you want this year to look like for you?” → “What’s important to you?”
- “How can I help?”

Notice we’re not asking about grades—we’re asking about values, direction, and ownership. When children define success on their own terms and know we’re behind them, motivation and confidence soar.

2. Daily Check-In Questions

Instead of “How was school?” (which invites “fine”) try rotating questions that build reflection, kindness, and resilience:

- “What did you do today that was hard?” → “Who did you help today?”
- “What made you laugh?” → “Who was kind to you?”

These questions strengthen emotional intelligence, provide insight into wellbeing, promote kindness as a daily habit, and build trust in the parent-child relationship. For teenagers, these can be texted, asked over dinner, or saved for bedtime.

3. The Friendship Audit

Friendships are a major predictor of belonging and school satisfaction.

For younger children: Ask who they played with, who they like spending time with, and set up **unstructured** play when possible.

For adolescents: Ask who they sit with, who they message, who they feel safe with, and help them nurture **healthy** rather than simply **popular** friendships.

A simple formula is:

1. Learn names
2. Learn patterns (who they mention most)
3. If possible, make parent-to-parent connections
4. Create opportunities for face time (not just FaceTime)

4. The Activity Opt-Out Audit

Many children are overloaded by extracurricular activities that they no longer enjoy, that exhaust them after school, or are powered by parental nostalgia or sunk cost. Ask: "If we weren't already doing this, would you choose it today?"

If the answer is no, consider letting it go. Quitting is not failure -it's **alignment**.

Children need **one** of the following (not all): ✓ Movement ✓ Creativity ✓ Connection

Not a jam-packed schedule.

In Summary: What Parents Can Do This Week

Here are the **5 most effective actions**:

1. **Have a relaxed emotional check-in**
2. **Identify who has your child's back at school**
3. **Lower the bar on routines—raise the bar on connection**
4. **Use daily check-in questions to learn and support**
5. **Run a friendship + activity audit in Week 1–3**

This is how we build back-to-school experiences that support not just performance, but wellbeing, confidence, and belonging



Dr Justin Coulson is a dad to 6 daughters and grandfather to 1 granddaughter. Justin travels all around the country, speaking at schools to students, educators and parents about wellbeing and relationships. He is also the parenting expert and co-host of Channel Nine's Parental Guidance, and he and his wife host Australia's #1 podcast for parents and family: The Happy Families Podcast. Justin has written 10 books about families and parenting - with the latest about raising boys out this year! For further details visit happyfamilies.com.au.



You are the Light of the World

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A



Draw a picture of yourself setting a good example to others.

Gospel

Mt 5:13-16

Jesus said to his disciples: 'You are the salt of the earth. But if salt becomes tasteless, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be trampled underfoot by men.'

'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill-top cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on the lamp-stand where it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine in the sight of men, so that, seeing your good works, they may give the praise to your Father in heaven.'

Unscramble and decipher these tiles to reveal one of Jesus' sayings from this week's Gospel.

